

June 22, 1983 - The Carbondale News p. 4

a nice  
little article  
that is  
filled with  
information.  
I shall be  
curious to  
see if there  
is any  
response  
from "the  
monde"  
to this  
article.

Written by  
Phil Heth.  
I don't think  
I read this  
column in  
last week's  
paper. I  
shall have to  
read it every  
week. I  
almost  
missed seeing  
this public  
statement  
about RTP  
and SRP.

## Local history

By S. ROBERT POWELL

On June 22, 1830, the first passengers ever to travel over the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company's Gravity Railroad traveled from Honesdale to Carbondale. The extraordinary circumstances surrounding this ride are these:

On June 16, 1830, Philip Hone, Mayor of New York City and President of the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, together with a party of 19 friends, boarded the steamboat Albany at New York and traveled up the Hudson River to Bolton, where they spent the night. On the following day, Philip Hone (after whom Honesdale was named) and his guests took passage on the packet boat Silas Wright Jr. and began their journey to Honesdale over the D&H Canal. The evening of the 17th they

stopped at Wurtsboro; on the 18th they stopped at the mouth of the Lackawaxen River. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon on the 19th, they arrived in Honesdale. The 20th and 21st they spent in Honesdale.

On Tuesday, June 22, Philip Hone and his guests boarded two coal cars, which had been provided with seats, and journeyed from Honesdale to Carbondale. At that time, the Gravity Railroad was single tracked and consisted of eight planes (five planes from downtown Carbondale to the summit of the Moosic Mountains at Rix's Gap, two planes between Parview and Waymart, and one plane at Prompton) and three levels (the one and one-half mile level at Rix's Gap, the six-mile level between Waymart and Prompton, and the four-mile level between Prompton and Honesdale).

The entry in Philip Hone's diary for

the 22nd of June declares that the ladies in the party were delighted with "a mode of traveling so novel and interesting." Philip Hone further records in his diary that he and his friends, during their ride over the Moosic Mountains, "were under a strong but agreeable excitement." When Hone and his friends reached Carbondale at 5 o'clock in the afternoon on the 22nd, they stopped at Townsend's Hotel, where they had dinner.

Regular passenger service on the Gravity Railroad from Carbondale to Honesdale was not instituted until 1877 - 47 years after this pioneer ride by Philip Hone and his friends. Passenger service on that portion of the Gravity Railroad that extended between the Providence section of Scranton and Valley Junction (below Olyphant), however, was begun during the summer of 1860.

## First passengers rode Gravity Railroad 153 years ago today

## Thinking out loud . . . .

The thermometer read 94 degrees last Thursday when we reached into our mailbox and pulled out the Sears & Roebuck winter catalog. Is it really time to start Christmas shopping? Sorry, folks, but we're not in the mood yet. Why don't we at least wait until the 4th of July? . . . .

Along the same lines, we talked with Alex Lilje, owner of Lilje's Shoe Store in Honesdale, who said he had just received a large shipment of winter snow boots. How can people plan so far ahead? We do our Christmas shopping on Christmas Eve and buy boots only after frostbite sets in. . . .

Did you notice that there are only a

few empty stores in Carbondale? Suds and Duds laundromat, owned by Nick Mancuso, is a welcome addition to town and is located in the building that formerly housed Kelly's Drug Store on the corner of South Main Street and Seventh Avenue. . . .

Dominick's Pizza is another new business. Located next to the Columbia Hose Company in the building that used to house Healey's Pharmacy, proprietor Dominick Piraino prepares some really good pizza and Italian bread. . . .

What we don't know is who is opening "Animal Crackers," a store adjacent to the liquor store on South Main Street, that will apparently sell children's

clothing? . . . .

Does anyone own a dog that is not deaf and isn't afraid of thunder? . . . .

We had a nice talk with Doctor Morton Hodes. The Doctor recently attended a convention for Doctors of Optometry at Mount Air Lodge. . . .

Have you had to buy batteries lately? Good flashlight batteries used to cost about a quarter each. Now the alkaline batteries are almost \$1.50 each. You can buy a flashlight for less than the batteries. . . .

It's nice to hear the chimes at the Presbyterian Church ring again. . . .

The flower boxes which now decorate Memorial Park and various business establishments are a credit to the city and the people who built them and planted them. Tony Mikloiche deserves a lot of credit for his part in planting the flowers, but most of the praise should go to the men who conceived the idea and personally designed and built the boxes - Russell and S. Robert Powell. . . .

A television comic recently said, "You know, there are a lot of foods that cause cancer in rats. Good, I hate rats!" . . . .

Did you ever listen to the police on a scanner or notice on television that when a policeman talks over a two-way radio and gets a check on a license plate he says, "Give me a check on license number B as in Boy, A as in Apple, Y as in YES, 425." It's important to use a word instead of just a letter because "Y" could be mistaken for "C" or "E" or any other letter they want to use. Aviators and military people, on the other hand, use a standard phonetic alphabet. Alpha, Bravo, Charley, Delta, Echo, etc., are second nature to thousands of people who have to communicate by radio. Maybe police departments should be required to learn the standard phonetic alphabet. By the way, the phonetic alphabet has been changed since World War II when it used to be "Able, Baker, Charley, Dog, Easy, Fox, etc." . . . .

Sidewalk Sale Days are coming in Carbondale. July 21, 22, 23 are the tentative dates. . . .

Thank  
you  
Phil.

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